

NAME: Sakada, Mitsuyo DATE OF BIRTH: 8/15/1882 PLACE OF BIRTH: Wakayama
Age: 92 Sex: F Marital Status: W Education: 4th Grade

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1905 Age: 23 M.S. M Port of entry: _____
Occupation/s: 1. Housewife 2. _____ 3. _____
Place of residence: 1. Oakland, Ca. 2. _____ 3. _____
Religious affiliation: Buddhist Church
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: An assembly center near Sacramento, California
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake, Ca. & Topaz, Utah
Dispensation of property: Basement of own home (stolen) Names of bank/s: _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. Dishwasher 2. _____
Jobs held outside of camp: _____
Left camp to go to: Chicago, Illinois

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: _____
Address/es: 1. Chicago, Illinois (6 yrs) 2. Sacramento, California
3. _____
Religious affiliation: Buddhist Church
Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 4/1/74 Place: Sacramento, Ca.

Translator: Taeko Hernandez

NAME: MRS. MITSUYO SAKADA

Age: 92 years old

Birth date: August 15, 1882 (Meiji 15)

Place of Birth: Wakayama City

Major Occupation: Husband was in the florist business with two other brothers in Oakland.

Came to U.S.: 1905

Relocation Camp: First somewhere near Sacramento, then to Tulelake.

Interviewer: Rev. Hei Takarabe

Interviewed Date: April 4, 1974

Translator: Mrs. Taeko Hernandez

Translator Date: June 1974

NAME: MRS. MITSUYO SAKADA

Age: 92 years old

Q. What is your name?

A. My name is Mitsuyo Sakada.

Q. What part of Japan were you born?

A. I was born in Wakayama City.

Q. When were you born?

A. It is on a copy of my family register. I was born on August 15 of Meiji 15 (1882).

Q. How old are you now?

A. I am 92 years old.

Q. 92 years old! That's really something.

Q. What was your family in Japan doing?

A. It was at 70 Kiroku-cho. My father was known as a celebrity, and served his town.

Q. What kind of work was he doing?

A. He was a wholesale dealer of umbrellas. He has been a head of a union of his town for a long time, so the people build monument to the memory of my father in the precincts of Gohyaku-Rakan¹ (shrine) which was on the way to Wakaura. This is the fact.

Q. What kind of person was your father? Was he soft?

A. He was a man who did good turns for the society before anything else. I read in a newspaper that Mr. Ryusuke Tsurumi in Japan died recently. Also in the Nichi Bei², the death of

- A. Mr. Shinichiro Oka was reported entitled: "A Mysterious Death of A Celebrity." I am thinking that I have to read the article at any cost, which was divided into two parts and in the paper for two days. Anyway, my father, as a prominent figure in finance, he did his best to serve the society.
- Q. I'll sit down here.
- A. It would be too long if I tell everything.
- Q. That's all right.
- A. I'll bring a copy of my family register now.
- Q. No, you don't have to.
- A. I still keep my passport and some other things.
- Q. Please tell me more about your father.
- A. Tokujiro was his name. In Meiji 38 (1905) during the Russo-Japanese War, my husband came to Japan from America to take me as his bride. The next year, a big earthquake happened in America. I was living in Oakland then, and a lot of people came to my place to evacuate from the disaster zone. We were doing our business on a large scale at that time. Most of them are already dead now, and their sons inherited the business.
- Q. Please talk about your father. He was a prominent figure in his town, wasn't he?
- A. At that time, no such union had existed in his town, and he was the person who first organized the union of wholesale dealers. I'll bring a copy of my family register.
- Q. All right. Please show it to me.
- A. Mrs. Tanaka, please bring a heavy case on the drawers in my room. It's a long, long story. In Meiji 27 and 28 (1894 and 1895), the Sino-Japanese War occurred.

Q. What do you remember about the war?

A. No, I don't remember so well, since I was very little.

Mrs. Tanaka now enters the interview.

*At. Is this the one you asked?

A. Thank you, thank you. Would you please open this?

Q. Yes, I do.

A. I keep my passport and some others in this trunk. Mrs. Tanaka, please turn the light on. It is easy to open it, isn't it?

Q. Is that so? ... I opened it. Please Is this the one? It is written "Important Papers". "Mitsuyo Sakada ..."

A. Isn't it dark?

Q. Yes, it is. "Wakayama City, Wakayama Prefecture." What is this?

A. A Copy of my family registrar.

Q. No, this is a graduate certificate of an elementary school. You were born on August 15 in Meiji 15, it says. "I hereby certify that this person graduated Jinjo-Showgakko³". It says "April 7, Meiji 25." How far did you go to elementary school?

A. I don't quite remember. I'll look up my passport I started my schooling when I was six years old.

Q. Since you graduated this school when you were 10, so you finished 4th grade, didn't you?

Q. Was your husband adopted into your family?

A. Yes, he was. After he entered my family, he left for America

*At. Mrs. Tanaka's answers.

- A. to observe the situation for a few years. His last name used to be Nishiyama. Being only one child in my family, I was not allowed to marry into another family. He didn't care about being adopted to my family since he was going to America. He came back to Japan to take me with him to America, and at last we settled in this country and didn't return to Japan. However, we came back to Japan three or four times totally.
- Q. So your husband took your family name Sakada after the marriage, since you were the only child of the Sakadas. Is that right?
- A. Yes, that's right. ... In this way, I got married with Mr. Yoshinosuke Nishiyama by marriage arrangement, and he entered into my family as an adopted son by taking my family name. Then we came to America, and got our children; first, a boy, then a girl who is now Mrs. Miyamoto; the second daughter who is married with Mr. Miyamoto, and the third daughter, who is now in Berkeley and is married with Mr. Kobayashi whose father is a member of the Buddhist Association.
- Q. Was Oakland the first place you lived after getting to America?
- A. When I landed here, his two brothers had had greenhouses in Oakland. So I have lived there for forty years. Then we left.
- Q. Tell me about the time when you just got here.
- A. It was the time that the exclusion of us was quite strong. I thought I surely had put the Chronicle in my trunk, but I couldn't find it. Anyway, I was not allowed to land because of the trachoma I was suffering. Being healthy and not trachomatous, my husband landed from the boat leaving me behind in order to prepare for getting settled. There was

A. another lady, already dead in Los Angeles, who also took the boat at Yokohama called by her parents. She wasn't allowed to land either because of trachoma. We stayed for a month on a second floor of the custom house at the port. My husband withdrew money from a bank, which I don't remember the name, and called a doctor for me. After one month, I was permitted to land. Only Mrs. Tokuyama in Los Angeles and I were admitted to land, and the rest of them were sent back to Japan.

Q. Were they sent back?

A. Yes, because they didn't have anyone who paid for a provisional landing permit for them. Since my husband and his brothers were reliable enough to manage this situation, I was able to land. What was the name of the bank? I believe it still exists.

Q. In what year did you come to this country as a bride?

A. It was in Meiji 38 (1905). The date was ... The wife of Mr. Tokuyama in Los Angeles is already dead, so ... I can't remember, since it's long time ago.

Q. That's all right. So you had to stay at the port for one month, and ...

A. And then we, Mrs. Tokuyama and I, parted from the place and never met again. Long after this, I heard about their success in Los Angeles. Indeed, she was a nice person.

Q. Then you went to Oakland?

A. Yes, I did, and stayed there for a long, long time.

Q. Did your husband own greenhouses?

A. Yes, he did. His elder brother was doing a business in Ingleside, a suburb of San Francisco. We succeeded in the

A. work and did the business in a large scale. Before the earthquake, we had already had a big house built. On the third floor, boy servants stayed, we had our rooms on the second floor, and on the first floor there was a kitchen and some space for growing flowers. I'm not boasting of this, but it was really a nice place, although few people know about this, I'm afraid.

Q. Did the earthquake occur the next year?

A. Yes, it did. It happened in the next year of my landing.

Q. Is that so?

A. Quite a few people came to my house from San Francisco, seeking refuge, since we had a big house. Everybody is dead now, sorry to say.

Q. Can you remember any hardship you experienced?

A. I have never had any particular hardship.

Q. Really?

A. We lived together, my husband and his two brothers in the big house. Then we parted, since we got our own family and children. To think of those days, I'm deeply moved.

Q. Then the family name of your husband's brothers were Nishiyama, wasn't it?

A. No, it wasn't. It was Kimura, although it had been Nishiyama originally. A son of Nishiyama is now in Oakland. You may get some information from him. His name is Kumao Nishiyama. He is a son of the younger brother of my husband.

Q. What was the name of the store?

A. It was "Kimura", since one of their family name was Kimura. Originally, everybody was Nishiyama, but in order to avoid from being drafted as a soldier. At that time, one didn't

A. have to go for service if he was to succeed his family, therefore, one of the brothers arranged to succeed the Kimuras and changed his name. Since my husband entered my family as an adopted son, his family name was changed from Nishiyama to Sakada. His younger brother was quite a man and worked as a president of a market association. His elder brother was also a president of a market association in San Francisco. Therefore, my husband used to joke, "I am no good, so sweeping is the most suitable for me." He said that his father always ordered him to work as soon as he came back from school. He had worked a lot, I heard.

Q. Was the father of your husband also here?

A. No. He was in Rokuri-Hama of Wakayama Prefecture in Japan. In Oakland, the three brothers, Kimura, Nishiyama, and Sakada ran the greenhouse. Then came that big earthquake.

Q. Did you get any damage by that?

A. No, we didn't. But in San Francisco, there happened a big fire, and it was awful There is a man in Richmond who knows about this very well. His name is Mr. Oishi.

Q. Do you know anything about the hardship your husband experienced?

A. It was very exclusive here. One day, on a sidewalk of a street, . . . I didn't know anything at that time, because I just got to this country.

Q. What else did your husband experience any difficulties?

A. He didn't have any difficulties except this exclusion, I think.

Q. Do you remember the period of depression around 1933?

A. That was the time when the President of this country changed.

Q. Wasn't he President Hoover?

A. Yes, he was. At that time, our store had still business connections with a bank, but the financial situation got worse and worse. We had quite a few workers, but finally we had to say to them, "You can stay here if you want to. And if you want to go somewhere for another job, you can leave." Some of them left our store, such as a man from Fukuoka. First, my husband came to America alone for observation, then he went back to Japan to take me to this country. But I could not land because of the trachoma I was suffering from, and had to stay at a custom house with Mrs. Tokuyama who lived in Los Angeles later. The two of us saw an eye doctor there and were allowed to land, although I don't know if my eyes were recovered or not. The second time I went back to Japan, I traveled in the first cabin. My heart is full, thinking of those days. Yes, too full ... Everything passes so far away

Q. How did you feel when Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese and the war broke out?

A. We could not go out at night or in the day time, because the situation was too dangerous for us. I didn't go out, so I don't know the exact situation at all.

Q. How did you feel when you heard the news of the Pearl Harbor attack?

A. I was shocked. I was at Mr. Yoshida who is still doing a business in a big scale in Oakland. "Oh, it's going to be bad! A war between Japan and America!" Hearing this, I didn't

A. believe it nor take it seriously. I thought that it couldn't be true. And it was true. We couldn't go out, because it's too dangerous for us. With this age I forgot everything easily.

Q. Where did you go for relocation camping?

A. First, I went to somewhere near Sacramento, but I forgot it since it's long ago. I wish I had someone here with me to help my poor memory. On Florin Road there is a man named Mr. Yamazaki whose daughter is now the wife of my eldest son. He knows everything about this.

Q. Where was the camp? Did you go to Utah? To Tule Lake?

A. Yes, I went to Tule Lake. First, I was taken in a house in Sacramento, then I went to Tule Lake, and was moved to Toparse(?).

Q. How long have you been in Tule Lake? About a year?

A. No. I think I stayed there for two years or so. Whenever I see my friends, we talk about the relocation life that we had a good time at Tule Lake.

Q. What was good there?

A. Well, we just played, had fun, and didn't have to work, although I did some dishwashing. Bad with the legs, my husband didn't go to work. I miss those days.

Q. Is that so?

Q. Then you moved to Torpase. When did you come back to California from the camp? Did you come back directly to Sacramento?

A. No, I didn't. Since my son was in Chicago, I went to Chicago first. He is already dead, but he was a doctor in Chicago.

- A. So I went over there, found a job of washing glasses in a hotel, and have worked there for six years. This working experience allowed me to receive social security. Without this, we cannot get the security. ... I left my belongings at Florin, but everything was stolen.
- Q. When did your husband decease?
- A. It is already ten years since he died.
- Q. When did you come back here from Chicago?
- A. There was a grand meeting of Shimin-Kyokai held in San Francisco, and my son, Masao, being elected as the President of National ... attended the meeting. So I went there with him. My daughter in Sacramento whom I saw at the meeting did not want me to go back to Chicago, because she knew that I had to work again there. I asked the hotel in Chicago for my quitting the job and sent my unemployment insurance, then they told me that they were still waiting my return. Hearing this, I wanted to go back to Chicago to work. But she never let me go.
- Q. At that time, did your husband come to San Francisco with you?
- A. Yes, he did, although his legs were bad. This way, we came to Sacramento from Chicago. Sorry to say, I don't remember any particular thing which is useful for recording. Who is the person that is a member of your church ...
- Q. Is he Mr. Mayeda?
- A. No, no. Another person.
- Q. Is she Mrs. Miyasaki:
- A. No. There is another person in your church, who has to do with a guild bank.

Q. Oh, he is Mr. Itano, isn't he?

A. Yes. Mr. Itano is the person. If you ask him, he can tell you, since he is quite a senior.

Q. What do you remember most clearly? A lot of things happened to you, I think.

A. In the camp, at night, there was a fun time of dancing and playing bingo. My husband didn't like gambling, and didn't want to let me go there. So I begged him to let me go just once, and I went out to the place stealthily. I won the first prize, a fine blue blanket in the bingo. With the blanket, I came back to the room, and showed it to my husband, saying, "Papa, I got this nice thing there!" Wherever we might go, we were safe, as long as we were in the camp. So I was not afraid of going anywhere within the camp.

Q. What kind of hobbies did you have?

A. At that time, Mr. Aoki who died last year, offered Shamisen⁴ from his store to the people in the camp.

Q. What else do you remember?

A. No, not particularly. Mrs. Tanaka, do you remember anything?

At. I have nothing to do with this interview.

Q. Do you like it?

A. Oh, I miss the place, and would like to visit there. The person I just mentioned went to Chicago and brought back the napkins and some stuff from the place, since he liked the place very much. His daughter is living there.

Q. Have you been in Chicago for six years?

A. Yes.

Q. And you worked there, didn't you.

A. Yes. I had to, since my husband could not work because of his legs. Everyone liked me. thinking that I was a good person.

Q. Was the place owned by a white man?

A. It was a famous, and very big hotel in Chicago named Eliwata Hotel. It was owned by a white man. There was one more hotel that was bigger than this. There were quite a few Japanese people working there. The chief used to tell me to go back home early. In my opinion, there is nothing to be afraid of, if one is kind and honest to others. Since my Japanese name Mitsuyo was hard to pronounce, I changed it to Mimi. People called me "Mimi", and liked me very much. That's why I want to go to Chicago. They tell me that they would offer me a place to stay.

Q. Have you worked at one place for six years there?

A. Yes, I have. It was a big hotel.

Q. What kind of fun did you have, working there?

A. I washed glasses for milk and drinking. I washed only glasses.

Q. When did you start working in the morning?

A. I used to get up at 4:00 a.m. in the morning to leave for the hotel.

Q. Is that so!

A. There was a tram-car station not far from my house. I took this and changed to a train. I worked from 7 o'clock in the morning until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. They served us breakfast before the work, they also served lunch. Working in the hotel glasswashing, we had plenty of food. At 4 o'clock

A. we were served dinner before going back home. Then I took a train to take a lesson of Shamisen. I learned playing it quite a bit. The other day, I gave all my Shamisens to Kohsaka. Mrs. Tanaka, come and help with these pictures.

At. He can read Japanese, so don't worry. He knows both English and Japanese.

A. Can he read?

Q. Yes.

A. Where are my pictures?

Q. They are here.

At. She still keeps quite a few pictures, doesn't she.

Q. Oh, there are a lot of them. (While opening an envelope.)

A. Tanaka, you haven't seen these at Tule Lake, have you?

At. Yes, I think I have.

Q. How old were you when you entered the camp at Tule Lake?

A. I don't remember.

At. How many years have passed? It was in 1942, and it is 1974 this year. Therefore, it was about 30 years ago. She was about 60 years old at that time.

A. Yes, I think so. There are some who still live here in Sacramento, and some are already dead.

At. This is her dancing teacher, but I'm not sure.

A. This is a very famous dancing master in Japan. Mrs. Tanaka please help yourself.

Q. Did you learn Japanese dancing, too?

A. No, I learned only Shamisen. There should be a picture in which three of us were playing.

At. This must be it, but you are not here.

A. Yes, my teacher, I, and a man in hakama. My heart is full

Q. Who is he?

At. He looks like her family member.

Q. Who is this person? Is he your husband?

A. Yes, he is.

Q. You have five children, haven't you?

A. No, I had six. But I sent a boy to Japan to make him a doctor. So actually, I have five children here. (Pointing one of her children in the picture.) This child died.

Q. Died:

A. Yes, this one wearing glasses is dead. I have nothing to show you.

Q. When did you take this picture?

At. It must be really old.

Q. How many years older than you was your husband?

A. He was 13 years older than I.

Q. Thirteen years older? He was quite older than you, wasn't he?

A. Yes, he was.

Q. I think that those who got married at that time usually had ten years gap between husband and wife. I hear that almost all the Issei were like this.

A. Yes, that's right. Then, a little bit later, so-called picture-marriage became popular. My husband liked Shamisen very much. So he told me to learn Shamisen instead of English in the camp. In his opinion, it was too late for me to study English with my age. So I learned only Shamisen there. That's

A. why I am now having difficulty. If I had had gone to the English class and learned it in the camp, I shouldn't have had difficulty in communicating.

At. Are you going to keep this interview?

Q. Yes, we are. What do you mean?

At. I thought you were going to edit alien people's history.

Q. Yes, yes. We are going to edit Issei's history.

At. I think that this person hasn't had hard times so much.

Q. You haven't had a hard time so much, haven't you? Since your husband managed well and lived in town, you didn't go through difficulties.

At. My father suffered tremendously, and used to talk about the hardships. When he got to America, he was put in a wagon and taken about to show people that he was a Jap. He was thrown stones at and something. He shall be over 100 years old if he were alive.

Q. Is that right? When did it happen?

At. When he came to this country, this happened.

Q. What year?

At. He came here when he was 18 years old.

Q. About 80 years ago it was. So in 1890 to 1895, that happened.

At. He traveled around, and settled in Fresno, where no electricity or nothing was. Even when I got here, we didn't have a light.

Q. What was his name?

At. It was Nakamura.

Q. What was his first name?

At. Seinosuke. Seinosuke Nakamura.

Q. Probably the name is listed on Nenkan⁵.

At. He came here in a very early day. He is already dead. It is already 13 years since he died when he was 92 years old.

Q. Is that so?

At. He came here at the age of 18. He used to talk about the time when he arrived here.

A. How about Mayeda? He is too young to interview, isn't he. You are still young ...

Q. Before coming to America, what feeling did you have about this country?

A. About America? It was quite exclusionary, and we went through this situation.

Q. Do you think that you are glad to come to America?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Do you sometimes think that you could have had better life if you had stayed in Japan?

A. I was going to go back to Japan in a few years, since I didn't long for this country. But I had to stay here, because I had babies and the business expanded successfully. The three brothers got together and worked hard to run the store.

Q. Didn't the store go bankrupt during the Depression time?

A. Yes, it did and was taken by a bank. Later, the bank helped us begin the business again. Kinmon Bank was the name and it was a Japanese bank in San Francisco. Anyway, the three brothers were all steady. Some of their sons are still running their father's business. In Richmond, the mother of Mr. Oishi is still living, and I would like to see her. Her daughter lives here in Sacramento.

Q. So you had all your children's names entered in your family register in Japan, didn't you?

A. There is nothing left about this register, so I don't know well. I don't have citizenship here in this country. My friends suggested me to get it since it was easy to have. But Mr. Ohshima, my daughter's husband, told me that I didn't have to get it since I was a little bit too old.

Q. (Reading a document) ... graduated the first grade of elementary school ... Oh, this is what you got when you graduated the first grade, isn't it?

A. Yes, it seems like it. To build this school, Shisei Elementary School, my father made a lot of efforts. He was a person who didn't like to do anything half way, and was elected as a member of the municipal assembly and an official of a fire department. Once when we had an awful flood in our town, he didn't come back home without accomplishing his duty even it was at the risk of his life. I was sitting in the dark on the second floor alone, frightened, since I was little.

Q. What did your mother do?

A. She helped my father very hard. Although it is my guessing and I don't know exactly.

Q. How was your mother like?

A. Oh, she was a very affectionate mother. When I got sick lately, I cried for my mother, wishing she came to see me, although my daughter took good care of me. There is nothing like mother.

Q. Do you remember some lessons that you learned from your parents? Are you a Buddhist?

A. Yes, I am.

Q. Is it Shinshu?⁶

A. When my son, a doctor in Chicago died, Mr. Yamamoto, a member of Minsho-kai, who has died recently, recommended very hard to change my religion. So I told him that I didn't want to change my family's traditional religion. He insisted to change my religion, so persistently, visiting often at the Oshimas, where I was staying, that finally Mr. Oshima had to accuse him of being persistent.

Q. What is the most important lesson that you learned from Buddhism?

A. I was unable to attend the worship service so often because of my children. Just recently, I am attending constantly. I feel I am undeservedly blessed when I listen to the words. But when my children were little, I just couldn't make it.

Q. You have two copies of your family register, don't you?

A. No, I have just one.

Q. You have a few copies.

A. The other day when Priest Ishimoki visited me, I asked him to write in English "Don't burn this box." on this trunk full of my records. He wrote in red "Keep this box."

Q. Did he?

A. Yes, here it is, in red ink.

Q. Oh, I see.

A. I had written on this "Don't burn this" in Japanese, since I don't know how to write in English, although I can read English.

A. Mrs. Tanaka, since Rev. Takarabe visited me with much trouble, why don't you join us and talk?

At. I came from Japan. Thinking the education in Japan was better for their children, parents used to send them to school in Japan. But when the children came back home from Japan after finishing school, they naturally found a cool gap between their parents and themselves because of the long-time separation. It was a sort of difficult situation. I thought that life was all like this, and that this was my given destiny.

Q. When did you come back from Japan?

At. I came back during the Hoover Depression.

Q. Oh, that was the worst time. How old were you at that time?

At. I was 18 years old.

Q. You came back after finishing schooling?

At. I went to Japan at the age of 6 and came back here when I was 18 years old after graduating a high school.

Q. The exclusionary movement against us/^{was}really strong, wasn't it?

A. Yes.

At. And there still exists the mood.

A. The Chronicle was really bad to us.

Q. It was the Hearst's newspaper in San Francisco, wasn't it?

At. They say that the World War II was a racial war. It was too bad for the Japanese people that Japan lost, but it turned out good actually. After the war, a lot of Japanese people here were employed. Before the war, few of us had been employed by the State. They didn't employ Japanese.

A. This tastes hot.

At. Is it?

A. Please go get some manju⁷.

Q. No, this is enough. No, thank you.

A. I didn't know when you were coming, so I didn't prepare ...
I also would like to have manju, so ... Mrs. Tanaka, would
you please ...

Q. No, please don't mind. If you would like to have it, please
go ahead.

A. I've got some to serve my family altar, and it is still there
untouched. Please get a little bit.

At. Manju? What kind shall I get? Combination.

A. Please get five or so.

At. Okay.

Q. Were you expecting a baby in Japan?

A. No. (Looking at a picture in her passport.)

A. Everyone looks pretty when she is young.

Q. You were 18 years old. You look very pretty.

Q. (Reading her passport.) "American Consulate, Kobe, Japan.

I, Mitsuyo Sakada, a housewife, subject of Japan. The passport
number is 377517. Dated January 14, 1918. Issued by
Japanese Foreign Office. I am about to go to the United States
accompanied by a daughter under 20 years of age as follows:

Sumiko Sakada ... Is she the eldest?

A. She often comes to see me here.

Q. Is she a wife of a coffee shop owner?

A. No, it is Yoshiko.

- Q. (Reading): "Sumiko Sakada, born at Oakland, California, USA, June 16, 1916.
- A. Received a telegram saying that my father was in a critical condition, I went back to Japan with this daughter and another daughter who was in the Oshimas. This is the passport issued at that time, isn't it?
- Q. According to this, you only took Sumiko with you.
- A. Is that so? What is this, then?
- Q. This is a passport.
- A. Passport? Is it?
- Q. What is the happiest thing that you have experienced in your life?
- A. Well, happy events don't remain in my memory. How could I remember everything happened in the past since it is a long time. I still remember how happy I was when I visited Japan. I went back to Japan for the first time in 13 years, receiving the telegram that my father was dangerously ill.
- Q. Did you go back alone?
- A. I took Sumiko and Yoshiko, who was married with Mr. Oshima, with me. It only took two days to get to Yokohama by boat. Sumiko still wore a diaper, but instead of washing them, I threw them away in the sea from the boat.
- Q. (Reading): In 1908, she was born. Yoshiko was the eldest daughter, wasn't she? So she was already 10 years old at that time.
- A. Kimiko married into the Miyamotos.

Mrs. Tanaka came back from a store.

At. Are you going to serve one to your family altar?

A. No, not today, since I have served before.

At. Please help yourself.

Q. Thank you. Please take one, grandmother.

A. I'm so sorry for such an impolite entertaining ...

Q. That's quite all right. I would like to make a copy of this, if she doesn't mind.

At. Sure. These days, copying is really easy. Not so long ago, the grandmother of Nijohji⁸ wrote for a newspaper - every record she had. She keeps the paper and showed me when I visited her. She is very good at writing things. She wrote how she entered the camp and every detail about the camp. We, human beings, can't tell what is going to happen to us in the future. I was so little at that time. I once ran a hotel here.

Q. Is that so? What is the name of it?

At. It's already gone now.

Q. Does Mrs. Miyasaki know it?

At. Which Miyasaki?

Q. Mrs. Ai Miyasaki.

At. Oh, Mrs. Miyasaki here. She was not running a hotel at that time. What was she doing:

A. I don't know.

Q. I think she once ran a hotel.

At. I don't think so, although I'm not sure. When she got out of the camp, she stayed in a hotel in Fresno for a while before coming

At. back here in Sacramento. My husband was born here, so he wanted to come back here. First we were thinking to go to live in Japan, but he didn't know Japanese. Finally, we decided to stay in America.

A. Please, please help yourself.

Q. Thank you, but I have already had one. How about you?

A. I had enough, thank you. Oh, I am so sorry for this. I should have prepared to receive you before hand.

Q. In this trunk, you have three of the same copies. Can I borrow one of them to copy? I'm going to return this.

A. Please hand it to Mrs. Miyasaki.

Q. No. I'm going to come back here again to return it.

A. I really hope that Mr. Mayeda could come back sooner. Is he still there?

Q. Yes, since he has just had an operation, he can't move yet.

A. I'm sorry.

At. There was a commanding officer named Webst or something. Anyway, my husband was a true-born Nisei, and couldn't write Japanese at all. At that time, they didn't teach Japanese. Also America was not so much developed. Therefore, when I came back here from Japan, I was surprised and couldn't believe that this was America. I thought that Japan was much more civilized. In Fresno, there was no lights nor any facility at all, so my parents said, "Why did you come back to such a place?"

Anyway, my husband didn't go to a Japanese language school. One day this commanding officer said, "Jap is Jap." Getting mad at

At. his words, he answered "no, no" at first to the question of allegiance. Then he changed his answer to "yes", which meant that he was faithful to America although he would not go for service. They sent him to Gerome. I, myself, answered, "yes, yes." And I had an interview and heard that my husband answered "no, no." Hearing this, I was so surprised. Where could you find such a fool who told an American commander that he wished Japan won the war? That was funny, indeed, although everybody got too, too nervous.

Q. Grandma, Sansei and Yonsei don't know about the Issei so well. They don't know Issei's culture or hardships they went through. What kind of things would you like to tell, if you have a chance?

At. In my opinion, Japan should inherit and protect its tradition, so should we, the Japanese people in America. We shouldn't lose the traditional ethics as a Japanese. For example, look at some foreigners in this country. We say we are an American, although it is a Japanese-American, and that is true. But one thing that we always have to keep in our mind is that we are Japanese.

Q. What do you think about this, grandma? Do you think that Sansei should consider himself a Japanese?

A. Well, everybody has its own character. Some listen to their parent's words, some don't. So it is hard to tell.

Q. Do you want to tell them that they are Japanese?

A. Yes. For myself, I am proud of my being a Japanese, and happy to be a Japanese.

At. At the same time, the Japanese people in Japan should also be proud of being Japanese. I always say the people who came Japan, "Don't misunderstand this country. You think that America is a rich country, don't you? It looks fine only externally, but watch out! Go and see the east side of the slums or ghetto. They say that America is a country of morality, but that's not true at all. Don't overestimate America. It is the country of Japan that proves our existence as Japanese." I always tell this to the people who are going back to Japan. Don't tumble down!

A. What?

At. I said, "Don't fall down!" It's going to be a big trouble if you fall down.

Q. Grandma, do you have something to tell the Sansei? Is there anything that you would like to teach to young people?

A. I would like to tell them to be proud of being Japanese, but I can't, because I don't know English. I also want to tell them that I am very proud of being a Japanese. There were a number of Japanese war sons ...

At. Some, like Mr. Kinya Noguchi, say that we should get together regardless of nationality so that we could get more familiar feeling with America.

Q. What do you mean?

At. Since this country consists of various different races, people here should unite together in order to make this country.

Q. Did Noguchi say this?

At. Yes. It may be one way. It is proudly said that they are going to have a Japanese-descent President in Brazil soon.

A. Where are you from?

Q. I am from Kagoshima.

A. Kagoshima? Then do you know Tsuchimoshi Kaikyoshi? He is also from Kagoshima.

Q. Yes, I know him.

At. Anyway, I wonder what is going to happen.

A. I think you are really lucky.

At. No, I don't think so.

A. Because you know both English and Japanese

At. No, no. That's why I am unlucky. Look at my sister and brother. They have never been to Japan, although my brother has been there for a little while from sixth grade to eighth grade. Then he continued his schooling here and went to a college for a while. And they are much better than I in a way. It is said that America is a country of working. People from Japan always say, surprised, "Oh, are you working?" So I answer, "Don't you know that America is a country of labor?" It is hard to say which is better, since the natures of these two countries are different. In Japan, they honor family first, while we honor each individual here in America. We have to be independent here.

A. I feel sorry that I didn't learn English in the Camp at Tule Lake.

Q. No, you shouldn't.

A. But we need English to live here.

Q. So you learned only shamisen at Tule Lake?

A. Yes, I did only shamisen, and gave up everything else, such as flower arrangement.

Q. Didn't you work there?

A. Yes, I did glass washing.

Q. No, no. I mean in the camp.

A. Oh, I thought you had asked me about the hotel. In Tule Lake, I washed dishes. There was a man from San Jose who also worked in the kitchen. I heard that he is already dead. When we were leaving the camp, he made a poem:

Sara-arai, Kansha Kansha de Sayohnara.
Leaving the Camp,
I now send with many thanks,
A farewell to dish washing.

At. Some miss the camp, because enough food was secured for us who had a lot of little children to grow. I was so worried when my children coughed. I don't know this camping was better for us or not.

A. How happy Mr. and Mrs. Itano, since they are still together, and their son is a man of steady.

At. My child, who is a girl, is now teaching at a college. She graduated U.C. I sometimes feel that she may have a different way of thinking from mine because she was born and bred in America. I really think that religion is important to us. I don't care what kind of religion. Any religion will do. I am a Buddhist. If we didn't plant a religion in our children's mind since they were young, they would become bad and spoiled. If they've got a religious heart, they couldn't do bad things when they felt like it. I can say this without any doubt. In Japan, Issei were taught these kind of things in a moral class, but they don't teach morals in America. Religion in the one that teaches us morals. Maybe this causes the difference. Issei and their children could get along and communicate well, but Nisei and Sansei can't. I think this is because of the

At.lack of education. I would say to children, "I was grown up in Buddhism, if you want to take this religion, take it." And I would plant religious heart in them while they were young. The white people educate their children with a religion. This is one difference between the white people and the Japanese people. Another difference is that the Japanese people think much of shame while the white people value pride. I guess this makes the difference between Caucasians and the Japanese people. If they had pride, they couldn't do bad things. But I am not sure. Since you know a lot of white people, I wonder how you feel about their way. Anyway, religion is important. We have to plant religious heart in our children. You see, every child has a critical period at the age of 18 or so. At that time, it is easy for him to stray from the right path, and he usually doesn't care about his parents' feeling. This is the very time that parents have to counsel them. They should not leave their child as he is. Issei didn't have so many delinquent children, while quite a few children of Nisei and Sansei are degraded. I think this is because of the parents' education to their children, religiously or morally.

Q. You came here by boat, didn't you? Do you remember anything about the boat? What happened in the boat?

A. It was the first time for me to get on a boat, so I got sea sick. I didn't go up on deck. So from the next trip, I always traveled to Japan in the first cabin.

Q. What kind of people were on board?

A. Japanese people were not so many and mainly Chinese people were on board. It was a long, long way. I got sick.

Q. How did white people treat you?

A. I didn't become acquainted with any white people, since I didn't have a chance. I always stayed in my room.

At. That sounds true, because you don't know English.

Q. Didn't you help your husband? Did you take care of your children all the time?

At. Of course she must have helped her husband's florist.

A. He was allowed to land since his eyes were good, while I couldn't because of my eyes. He landed first and sent an eye doctor to me.

Q. But didn't you help your husband after getting settled in Oakland?

A. Me? No, I didn't, because I had the children to take care of. The three brothers had a cook, a Japanese man. We had quite a few workers, who lived on the second and third floor of our house. This cook cooked for all of us. When the earthquake happened, the brick chimney of our house was shaking. Our workers hurriedly came down from the second floor. One of them only wore a kimono-robe without a band. It was so funny that we all laughed hard, although a little bit frightened by the earthquake.

Q. So you didn't even cook, did you?

A. No, I didn't.

Q. Really?

A. Our cook did.

Q. So did all the family of the three brothers get together and have dinner?

- A. Yes, in a large dining room. We had just started operating the business in a big scale when the Depression came.
- At. Everybody did like hers. In Sacramento, they mainly ran a farm, and hired a cook. At dinner time, everybody including their workers had a meal together.
- Q. The business went bankrupt once during the Depression time, and started again. Did the business succeed and become big again?
- A. No, we didn't start the business again. We gave up.
- Q. Then what did your husband do?
- A. What happened next? I don't remember.
- Q. He started a florist again, didn't he?
- A. I think he started again. My husband shipped flowers to the florists in Oakland, while his younger brother shipped them to San Francisco. But I don't know. We had just started the business in a big scale ... We took some pictures, but all is gone now. One of them was taken when a doctor was examining his eyes when we got to America. I was keeping them, but they are all lost.
- Q. Do you remember when it was?
- A. It was in Meiji 38 or 39 (1905 or 1906).
- Q. You can find it in the Chronicle office.
- A. Anyway it was in 1905 or 1906. You were not born yet then.
- Q. No, not yet.
- At. No, he was still in another world. Even I wasn't born yet at that time.
- A. What were you doing during that war?
- At. What war do you mean?
- A. Weren't you born yet?

At. Which war are you talking about? There were two wars. The Russo-Japanese war and Sheken⁹.

A. Hokushin-Jiken¹⁰.

At. That's another thing. In 1904 and 1905, there was the Russo-Japanese War, and times in America were good for a while. Then Sheken⁹ happened ... No, no. That's not right. What was it then? In Poston

A. Before the World War II, there were a couple of wars, I remember.

Q. Have you ever gotten homesick here?

A. Homesick? Yes, naturally I missed my mother often.

Q. How many times did you go back to Japan? Twice?

A. Four times.

Q. Did your husband belong to a Kenjin-Kai¹¹ or so?

A. At that time, it didn't exist yet.

Q. Did he belong to the Buddhist Association, then?

A. Such a thing didn't exist, either.

At. In Sacramento, it has existed for a long, long time, since my grandparents belonged to it.

Q. When you grew your children, what did you pay attention to most?

A. I didn't think about it. My husband liked to drink very much. He was so honest that he was sometimes cheated of his money. But God never deserts us. My son, Masao, who is already dead, became famous and won applause from everybody. Mr. Itano knows well about this. His death stung me to the quick and I doubted if there was a God.

Q. Was he your only son?

A. No, I had three sons.

Q. Three sons?

A. Yes, and I have also three daughters. Anyway, he studied optometry at a school and became an optometrist. Everybody knows how good he was. He was elected as the President of All American Shimin-kyokai.¹²

Q. The president? Was he the eldest son?

A. No, he was the second son.

Q. Your children living in Sacramento are all girls, aren't they?

A. Yes, three of them are here, although they live a little far away.

Q. When you had to go to a relocation camp, you were still in Oakland, weren't you?

A. Yes, we were. We put all our stuff in the basement before leaving. We had even a six feet tall byobu¹³ brought from Japan. Everything was stolen.

Q. Didn't you go back to Oakland to get your stuff in your house?

A. No, we didn't. When we ~~want~~ to see the house, everything was already gone.

Q. How did you feel when you were taken in a camp?

A. How did I feel? I felt miserable. Having our own house, we had to leave it, putting everything in the basement. We leased the upper part of our house. I heard that somebody went to see our house sometimes while we were away.

Q. When you were relocated, how many children did you have? Everyone had been already born?

A. Yes, and they were all old enough, although Sumiko had not been married yet.

Q. When you were relocated and put in a shack, how did you feel?

A. I was beside myself with a shock, and forgot myself.

Q. Wasn't that a poor house?

A. In a restroom, we had to pass water together in a line. It was very bad, and I could never forget it. It was especially bad for women.

Q. What did you think about the question of allegiance?

A. What do you mean?

Q. About the question of "yes" or "no".

A. I didn't say "no".

Q. You answered that you were on American side?

A. Yes. Therefore, they permitted my son who is dead to go out of the camp first.

At. Usually women said "yes", because they didn't have to go for service. There were a lot of men who answered "no, no," because they had to go to the war.

Q. Please say it again.

A. Zen-i¹⁴. In-nen¹⁵.

Q. Who wrote this book?

A. Mr. Usuke Tsurumi did.

Q. What was he? Was he a famous man?

A. Yes, he was a great man. His English was fluent. He made an overseas trip and visited one of my friend's house in Oakland. I was invited and had dinner with him.

Q. What kind of work was he doing?

A. He was a Diet member. Do you know Shimpei Goto? He got married with a daughter of Mr. Goto. I think Mr. Itano also knows this. I admired him. He spoke English fluently and he was also a jolly fellow.

Q. What was the hardest time you ever had?

A. We, the families of the three brothers, lived together in the same house with a cook. This proved to be bad and caused troubles. If we lived together for a long time, it would be natural that some complications which our relationship come out. About the fights between children and so on ... I have a picture of my children with our cook.

Q. You don't remember the situation after the bankrupt, do you?
What did your husband begin after the bankrupt?

A. No, he didn't begin any business.

Q. Didn't he work?

A. Well, let me see. What happened after that? I don't remember.
That's tje problem.

Q. You were living in the same house before leaving for the camp, weren't you?

A. No, we were living separately. During the Hoover depression, the business went bankrupt. What happened next? Anyway, we had a loan from Kimmon Bank to build our house. In San Francisco, there is an association called Meiji-Taishow-Kai, and I would like to joint it, but it is too far away.

Q. You were living in the same house before the war, weren't you?

A. No, we had already been separated when the war broke out. We reconstruct a former barn and started living there, while the family of my husband's elder brother began to live on the second floor of the house.

Q. You moved after you had been broken, didn't you?
Yes.

A. /Although I don't know.

- A. We had to leave the house, because the business went bankrupt. Since we had quite a few greenhouses, we shared them among three of us. I don't know what happened after this. Anyway, I would like to join the Meiji-Taishow-Kai in San Francisco and talk with the members, but it is too far away for me to go there.
- Q. The land and the house were possessed by the three brothers together, weren't they?
- A. Yes, and everybody grew flowers. The elder brother of my husband, named Kimura, was the president of a market in San Francisco. The younger brother of his also was elected as the president of a market once. Now, it is already our sons' generation. There is a man named Musaburo Shimada who is still living. I think he knows about the market in those days. It is a shame that I don't have anything to tell you in spite of your trouble to visit me.
- Q. No, that's quite all right.
- A. I sometimes remember something. I still can recite some parts of the Words of the Japanese Emperor from memory. Once I remembered it by heart, I can still recite it from memory. Isn't that amazing?
- Q. Compared with other Issei, you have experienced much less difficulties, haven't you?
- A. The three brothers were trusted and won reputation from the people. My husband used to lend money to his customers, but sometimes he could not get it back. Then a florist, Mr. Dohmoto, whose son is now dealing with camellias in Hayward taught my husband that he had to get a receipt from the

- A. florist he shipped flowers in order to get money back from them. Doesn't Mr. Mayeda know about these information you need? I heard that he traveled quite a lot in America. Did he write to you?
- Q. No, although I once wrote a letter to him. I also talked with him by telephone.
- A. Recently? Can't he come home soon? I feel lonesome. I'm sorry that you can't get so much from me.
- Q. No, no. Do you think that you are glad to come over here from Japan? Of course, it is difficult to answer.
- A. No, I don't know. When we were living in the same house, I felt constrained because of the complication caused by the situation of three families living together. I had also little children. I had a hard time there. How many times did I wish to go back to Japan? Many. But I couldn't make it, because the children were too little.
- Q. So you have three daughters and two sons, don't you?
- A. Yes. One of the sons is in Ohio, the other is in Michigan.
- Q. Talking about your age of 92, you have been living quite long.
- A. Yes, that's true. My father lived to be 72 years old and my mother died at the age of 78.
- Q. Everybody lived long, didn't they?
- A. I don't want to live long. When I visit Dr. Sugiyama, he tells me to live to be 100 years old. I say, "No, thank you."
- Q. The hardest thing is to feel lonely, isn't it?
- A. Yes, it is.

Q. You don't have any disease, do you?

A. No, I don't. Anyway, thinking about all these things, I feel so full. Mr. Yoshida, who is doing a business on a big scale in Oakland and I are good friends. Yesterday morning, we talked a lot on the telephone. He said, "Then you have no hock." To think of it, he is right. I have no hock. Because I can't go out to the church these days. If I fall down once, that's it. I would be sent to a senior home. So when my friend and I depart, we always say, "Let's be careful not to fall down." The day before yesterday, a friend of mine visited me and we talked about this, too. I can't go out now, but when it gets warmer, I'm going out. I can't go to the Buddhist Church now.

Q. Well, thank you very much for today.

A. I'm sorry that I couldn't answer you so well. It's a shame that I'm getting a fool ...

Q. No. That's not true.

#

APPENDIX

1. Gohyaku-Rakan. A shrine on the way to Wakaura. Page 1.
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